JOHN THOMAS DOWNEY

RICHARD FECTEAU

**Q.** *I would like to know if our Central Intelligence Agency ever dropped spies and saboteurs into Red China. If so, how and when?—G.O., Cambridge, Mass.*

**A.** The CIA used to train selected special agents on Saipan in the Mariana Islands and later at a secret training camp in Chigasaki, Japan. These agents were under the command of the chief of our espionage center in Atsuki, Japan. When their training was finished, the agents were air-dropped into Kirin and Liaoning provinces in Northeast China. The agents were, of course, Chinese, and in 1952 they were formed into two teams—"Team Wen" and "Team Shen"—under the command of John Thomas Downey, a CIA man who had been recruited at Yale University. On Nov. 29, 1952, Downey and another CIA agent, Richard G. Fecteau, flew into China in a C-47, dropped supplies to their operatives and were about to pick up Li Chung, one of their men, when their plane was shot down. Downey was sentenced to life imprisonment and Fecteau to 20 years' imprisonment in China. Fecteau, originally from Lynn, Mass., was released in 1971. Downey was released in 1973 after then President Nixon admitted to the late Chou En-lai that Downey had indeed been a CIA agent. Downey, who recently passed the bar exam and practices law in Wallingford, Conn., received approximately $400,000 in back pay from the CIA. Whether the CIA still drops agents into Red China, the Soviet Union and North Korea is, of course, a secret. Frank Wisner, the gentleman formerly in charge of CIA covert operations, took his own life some years ago. Since then the development of sophisticated satellite detection has diminished the need for air-dropping or submarine-landing CIA operatives.

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